

United States  
**Census  
2000**

### **The Reward for Rural Areas:**

**After Census 2000, more small rural communities will have the statistics they need for planning and programs.**

**Rural areas are now divided census tracts just as urban areas, so local officials can define unincorporated communities regardless of their total populations.**

**Billions of dollars in federal and state funding are distributed based on census data. A complete population count is a critical part of this process.**

# **Rural America Counts**

## **Why are Rural Areas Special?**

In 1990 the census missed approximately 1.2 percent of all rural residents. It missed 5.9 percent of rural renters, compared with 4.2 percent of urban renters. Because rural America includes everything from housing subdivisions just outside of urban areas to open country areas with very low population densities, Census 2000 is forming partnerships with those who know rural areas best: community groups, businesses, the media, and state, local and tribal governments.

## **To Ensure an Accurate Census, Partnerships are Especially Important in Areas Without House Numbers.**

A complete address list helps ensure that Census 2000 will reach households everywhere. While every address will receive a questionnaire, delivery methods will vary. Where the Postal Service delivers mail by house number and street name, questionnaires will be mailed to each residence. Where rural route/box number, post office box, and/or general delivery addresses are used, enumerators create an accurate address list before the census. At census time, they deliver questionnaires to each address and ensure that the list includes every dwelling.

## **The “Long Form” is Another Example of the Special Treatment Needed in Rural Areas.**

A significant proportion of federal funds supporting schools, employment services, housing assistance, highway construction, hospital services, programs for the elderly, and more are distributed based on data from the long form. Overall the long form goes to one in six addresses nationwide, but in some small towns and rural areas, as many as every other address may receive a long form. This larger sample is needed to ensure that these areas receive the same quality information as urban areas.

## **Spread the Word that Answering the Census is Important, Easy and Safe.**

The Constitution directs the Census Bureau to conduct a complete accounting of every resident every 10 years. People who answer the census help their communities obtain state and federal funds and provide valuable information for planning schools, hospitals and roads.

**Your answers are protected by law.** The Census Bureau cannot share the individual answers it receives with others, including welfare agencies, the Immigration and Naturalization Service, the Internal Revenue Service, courts, police and the military. The law works — millions of questionnaires were processed during the 1990s without any breach of trust.

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**To find out more about becoming a Census 2000 partner, call your Regional Census Center listed below.**

For additional information about Census 2000, visit the Census Bureau's Internet site at <http://www.census.gov> or call one of our Regional Census Centers across the country:

Atlanta 404-331-0573

Boston 617-424-4977

Charlotte 704-344-6624

Chicago 312-353-9759

Dallas 214-655-3060

Denver 303-231-5029

Detroit 248-967-9524

Kansas City 816-801-2020

Los Angeles 818-904-6522

New York City 212-620-7702  
or 212-620-7703

Philadelphia 215-597-8312

Seattle 206-553-5882

## **Three Steps to Ensuring an Accurate Census in Rural Areas.**

**1) Enlisting Rural Partnerships:** To increase participation in Census 2000, the Census Bureau is forming partnerships with organizations that are prominent in rural communities and provide services to large numbers of rural residents, including:

- Youth groups and Head-Start programs
- Rural clinics and health service organizations
- Volunteer programs and civic/service organizations
- Chambers of commerce and industry associations
- Farm organizations, cooperatives, and migrant and seasonal farm workers' associations
- Ministerial alliances and religious organizations
- National organizations that have affiliates and members in rural communities

**2) Partnering Effectively With Organizations in Rural Areas:** The Census Bureau seeks partnerships with state government agencies that serve rural areas, including departments of community development, social services, education and planning. Rural governments and community groups can help Census 2000 in various ways, including:

- Recruiting census takers and office staff
- Identifying locations to distribute forms
- Organizing census promotional events
- Providing space for testing and training census employees
- Identifying and providing space for Questionnaire Assistance Centers
- Identifying areas in need of materials in languages other than English

**3) Working With Partners in Rural Areas to Identify and Enumerate Hard-to-Count Populations:** The most difficult to enumerate areas are those where the following situations exist:

- A highly mobile population
- Language barriers
- Nontraditional household or living arrangements and irregular housing units
- Conditions that lead to resistance to outsiders or a disbelief in census confidentiality

